OSTRANDER, McDONNELL & KESEL
SUICIDE SQUAD
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LUKE / KARL '88

SLINGS AND ARROWS

WE ARE IN THE THIRD DAY OF A SPECIAL SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE INVESTIGATION INTO THE FORMERLY COVERT GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY CALLED THE *SUICIDE SQUAD*.

THE SQUAD'S ACTIVITIES WERE REVEALED TO THE PUBLIC IN A MEMO BY THE LATE SENATOR JOE CRAY AND HIS ASSISTANT, DEREK TOLLIVER. BOTH WERE SHOT TO DEATH WITHIN HOURS OF EACH OTHER, ALLEGEDLY BY MEMBERS OF THIS SQUAD.

THE MEMO WAS DISCOVERED AND REVEALED ONLY POSTHUMOUSLY. IT ALLEGED THAT INCARCERATED FELONS, SOME WITH META-HUMAN ABILITIES, WERE OFFERED THEIR FREEDOM IN RETURN FOR TAKING PART IN DANGEROUS, CLANDESTINE--AND POSSIBLY ILLEGAL--MISSIONS, SUPPOSEDLY IN U.S. GOVERNMENTAL INTERESTS.

THE WHITE HOUSE HAS DISAVOWED ANY DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF THE SQUAD'S ACTIVITIES.

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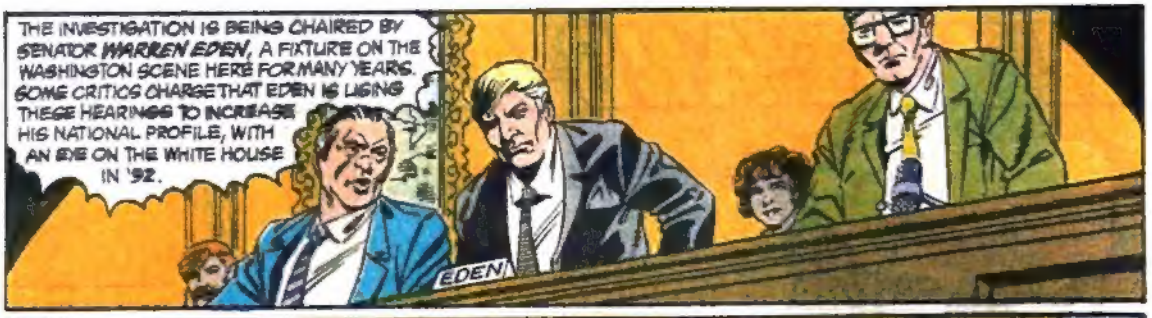
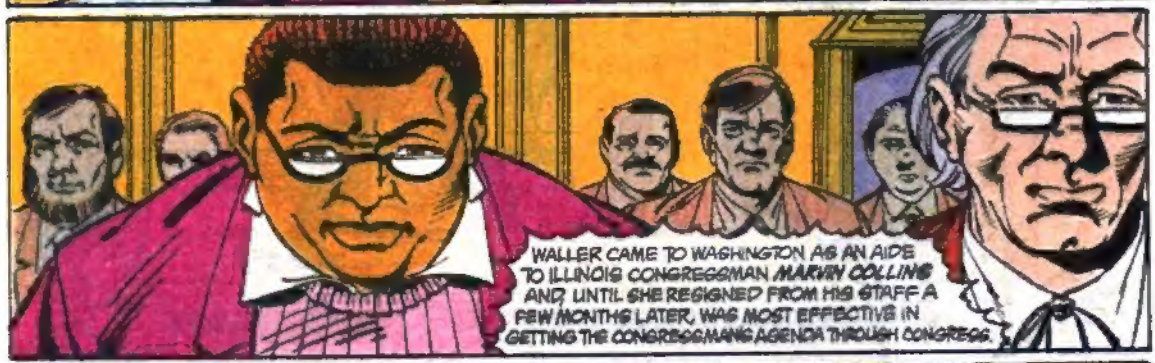

THE INVESTIGATION IS BEING CHAIRED BY SENATOR WARREN EDEN, A FIXTURE ON THE WASHINGTON SCENE HERE FOR MANY YEARS. SOME CRITICS CHARGE THAT EDEN IS USING THESE HEARINGS TO INCREASE HIS NATIONAL PROFILE, WITH AN EYE ON THE WHITE HOUSE IN '92.
EDEN

THIS IS AMANDA WALLER -- ACCORDING TO SOURCES, THE ORIGINATOR AND HEAD OF THE SO-CALLED SUICIDE SQUAD. THE MAN NEXT TO HER IS NOTED NEW ORLEANS LAWYER ANTOINE HEARNS, THE SO-CALLED CAJUN FOX OF THE COURTROOM.


WALLER CAME TO WASHINGTON AS AN AIDE TO ILLINOIS CONGRESSMAN HARVEY COLLINS AND, UNTIL SHE RESIGNED FROM HIS STAFF A FEW MONTHS LATER, WAS MOST EFFECTIVE IN GETTING THE CONGRESSMAN'S AGENDA THROUGH CONGRESS.

BY ALL ACCOUNTS, A TOUGH AND UNCOMPROMISING WOMAN. ALTHOUGH SHE FACES A FAIRLY HOSTILE COMMITTEE -- CRAY, HOWEVER CORRUPT, WAS A SENATOR -- SHE SEEMS UNFAZED.

"ONE WONDERS WHAT SHE IS THINKING RIGHT NOW."
MOST OF YOU WON'T BE SUMMONED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE BECAUSE THEY CAN'T FIND MOST OF YOU. THEY HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN SURE WHO ALL ARE ON THE TEAM.
THEY'RE GOING TO ASK ME THAT TOMORROW.
I WON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THAT ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD VIOLATE NATIONAL SECURITY.
I'LL TELL THEM YOU'RE ALL OFF ON A MISSION.
BUT WE'RE NOT ON A MISSION.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE.
I'M NOT!
I'M OUT OF HERE--EFFECTIVE NOW!
TAP TAP

YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE! YOU OWE THIS TEAM, TRESSER!
I OWE YOU SQUAT, WALLER! YOU DIDN'T GET ME OUT OF RUSSIA! EVE AND FLAG DID --AGAINST YOUR ORDERS!

DON'T YOU MESS WITH ME, TRESSER! YOU WALK OUT NOW AND I'LL TOSS YOU TO THAT SENATE COMMITTEE!
DO IT! I'D LOVE TO HAVE A FEW WORDS WITH THEM--TELL THEM HOW YOU BOTCHED THIS TEAM!

NONE OF THE WASHINGTON FIASCO HAD TO HAPPEN--NOT CRAY, NOT TOLLIVER, NOT FLAG, NOT DEADSHOT! YOUR ARROGANCE MADE IT HAPPEN!

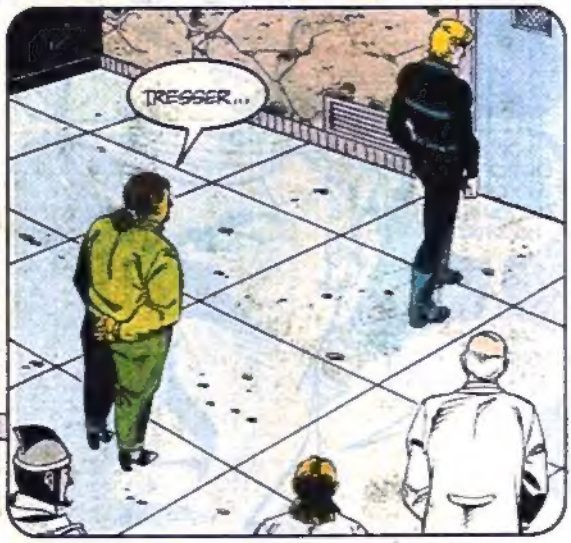
I CAN MAKE A LOT OF THINGS HAPPEN, TRESSER! SIT DOWN!
IS THAT A THREAT? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO IF I LEAVE?
YOU GOING TO HAVE ME KILLED, MRS. WALLER?

WHY NOT? IT'S ABOUT YOUR STYLE. AFTER ALL, I KNOW TOO MUCH. ISN'T THAT RIGHT? THAT COULD BE YOUR JUSTIFICATION.

THE REAL TRUTH IS--YOU'RE A BULLY, MRS. WALLER. YOU RUN THE SQUAD BY INTIMIDATION AND FEAR. YOU DEMAND LOYALTY BUT GIVE NONE. YOU MANIPULATE PEOPLE--AND TELL YOURSELF IT'S FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTRY.
ALL YOU'RE DOING IS PLAYING POWER GAMES. AND I'VE HAD ENOUGH.

NOW, GET OUT OF MY WAY OR I'LL PUT YOU IN THE HOSPITAL.
AND NO ONE HERE WILL LIFT A FINGER TO STOP ME.

EXIT


TRESSER...

WHEN I'VE FINISHED SETTLING THIS CONGRESSIONAL THING--DON'T BE WHERE I CAN FIND YOU.

YOU GET ONE SHOT, WALLER.
THEN I'LL COME BACK AFTER YOU.

SLAM
EXIT

Tap
Tap
I AM NOT JUSTIFYING MYSELF OR WHAT I DO.
ANYONE ELSE WHO WANTS OUT CAN LEAVE OR GO BACK TO THEIR CELLS. MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME.
PERSONALLY, MRS. WALLER, I FEEL PRIVILEGED TO BE HERE AND I, FOR ONE, INTEND TO WORK TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY...
OH, SHUT UP!
ALL RIGHT, SOME OF YOU ARE NEW AND WE'VE CHANGED THE RULES A BIT. USED TO BE YOU WENT ON A MISSION, AND EVERYTHING WENT OKAY, WE'D CUT YOU LOOSE.
NOW, INSTEAD OF SPENDING TIME IN PRISON, YOU SPEND IT WITH US. EACH MISS ON YOU GO ON GETS YOUR SENTENCE REDUCED.
GULF OF ADEN
SOM. PROT.
ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA
OGADEN
EQUATOR
KENYA
CHISIMAIO
THE COUNTRY OF OGADEN IN EAST AFRICA HAS BEEN AT CIVIL WAR FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS. IT USED TO BE RUN BY A FAMILY NAMED RENAMO WHO WERE OVERTHROWN BY GENERAL FRELIMO.*
THE AREA HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD HIT BY THE DROUGHT AND FAMINE THAT HAS AFFECTED ALL OF EAST AFRICA. THE CIVIL WAR HAS MADE IT WORSE.
* FIRESTORM #77-79.
THE GLOBAL RELIEF EFFORT HAS BEEN HEADED UP BY SISTER AGNES MARTINON. THE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN HAMPERED BY THE RENAMO GUERRILLAS, WHO OPPOSE ANY GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED RELIEF EFFORT.
AS YOU ALL KNOW, SISTER AGNES WAS TAKEN PRISONER SOME WEEKS AGO BY THE RENAMOS. SHE'S THE TENTH FOREIGN NATIONAL TAKEN BY THE RENAMOS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS.

INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO SECURE THE NUN'S RELEASE HAVE ALL FAILED. SO NOW WE TAKE OUR SHOT.
WE BRING THE NUN BACK ALIVE, THE INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM SHOULD MAKE IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO CLOSE US DOWN.

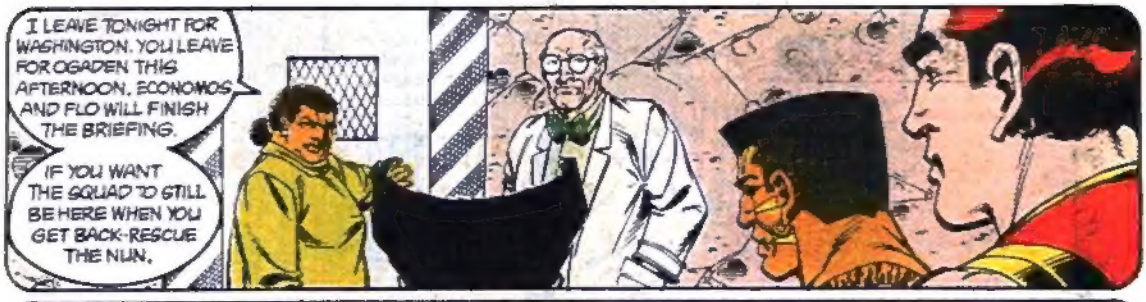
ARE WE SURE THIS NUN WANTS TO COME? SEEMS TO ME THE LAST TIME WE TRIED A RESCUE LIKE THIS*, IT BLEW UP IN OUR FACES.
* THE INFAMOUS FIREBIRD MISSION, ISSUES #5-7. --BOB

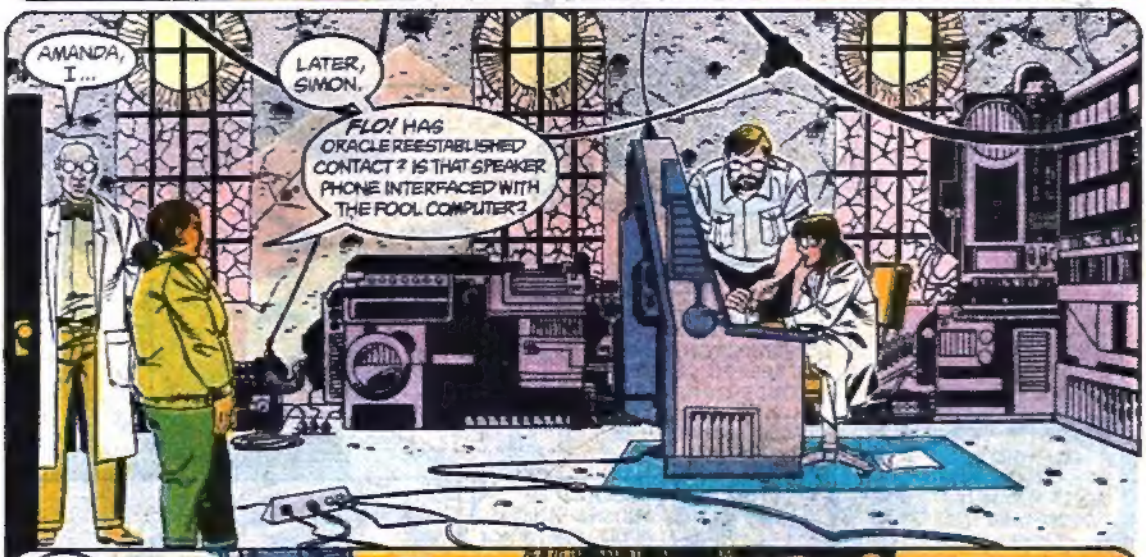
THAT'S WHY I'VE ASKED FATHER CRAEMER TO ACCOMPANY YOU ON THE MISSION. HE'LL BE THE CONTACT WITH SISTER AGNES.
THAT'S THE ONLY REASON I'M GOING ON THIS MISSION--OR I'D BE GONE WITH NEMESIS!

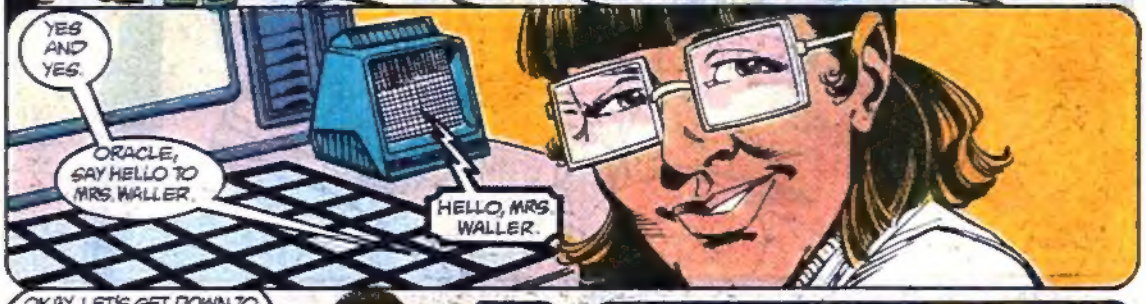
WHAT ABOUT THE OSADIAN GOVERNMENT? WHAT SORT OF ASSISTANCE CAN WE EXPECT?
NONE. SISTER MARTINON HAS BEEN A THORN IN THEIR CONSCIENCE FOR A LONG TIME.
THEY'D BE JUST AS HAPPY IF SHE NEVER SHOWED UP AGAIN --ESPECIALLY IF THEY CAN BLAME IT ON THE RENAMOS.

OH BEAUTY!
NOT BACKING OUT ON THIS ONE ARE YOU, BOOMERBUTT?

HEAVENS, NO! HAPPY TO DO MY PART! SOUNDS LIKE A FIRST-CLASS BARNEY! LOVE IT!
STREWTH!


I LEAVE TONIGHT FOR WASHINGTON. YOU LEAVE FOR OGADEN THIS AFTERNOON. ECONOMOS AND FLO WILL FINISH THE BRIEFING.
IF YOU WANT THE SQUAD TO STILL BE HERE WHEN YOU GET BACK-RESCUE THE NUN.

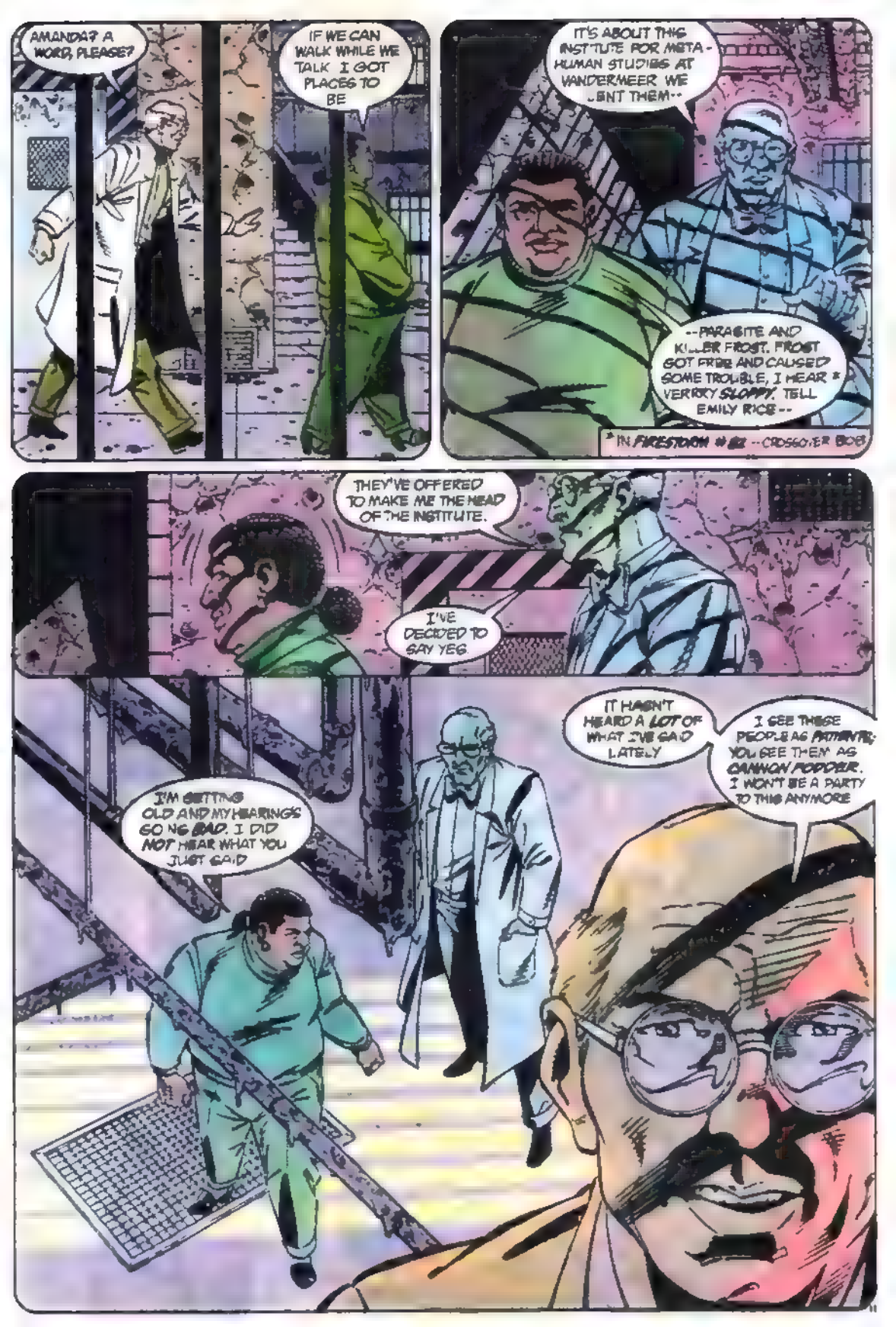

AMANDA, I...
LATER, SIMON.
FLO! HAS ORACLE REESTABLISHED CONTACT? IS THAT SPEAKER PHONE INTERFACED WITH THE FOOL COMPUTER?


YES AND YES.
ORACLE, SAY HELLO TO MRS. WALLER.
HELLO, MRS. WALLER.

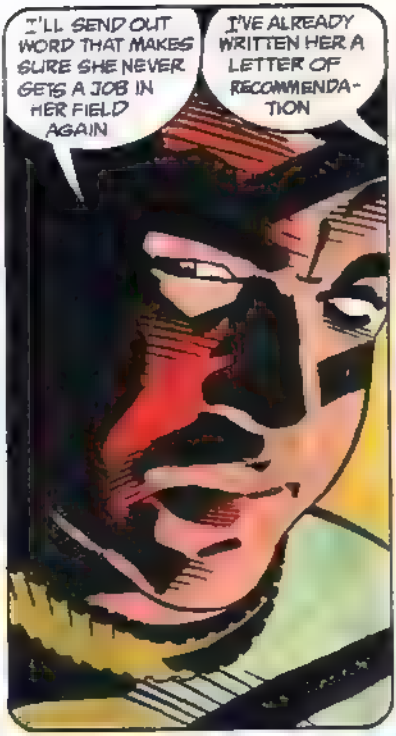
OKAY, LET'S GET DOWN TO BASICS. WHO ARE YOU AND HOW'D YOU CRACK INTO OUR SYSTEM, AND WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT?
I'M SOMEONE WHO IS VERY, VERY GOOD WITH COMPUTERS AND I HAVE ACCESS TO MANY PLACES I SHOULDN'T--SO I HAVE ENTRY TO A LOT OF INFORMATION.
AS FOR WHAT I WANT--THINK OF ME AS PART OF THE TEAM. A SOURCE.

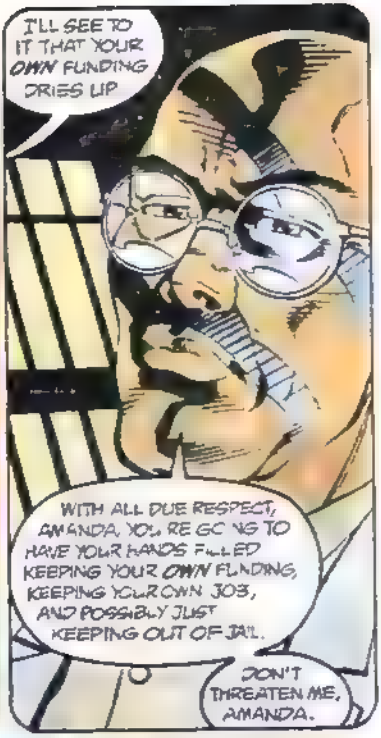
UH-UH. I KNOW THE NAMES OF ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR ME.
SO DO I. SHALL I LIST THEM?

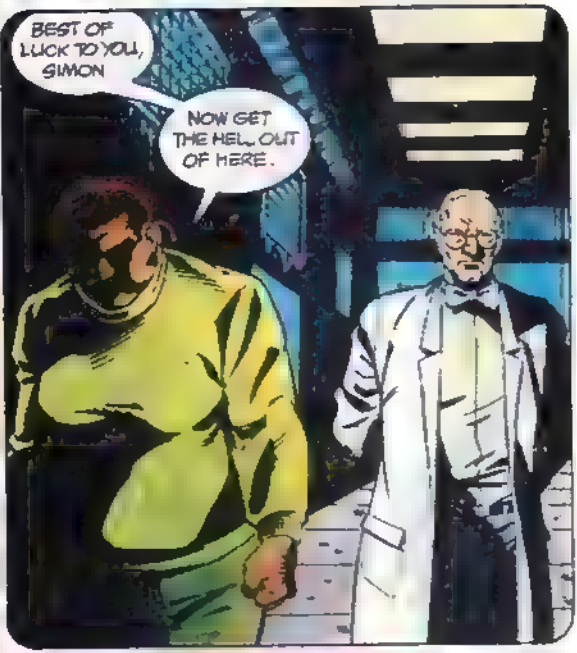
IF YOU NEED SOME INFORMATION, LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR ME IN YOUR DATABANK. I'LL FIND IT
OH--AND DON'T BLAME FLO OR JOHN FOR NOT TRACKING DOWN THE SOURCE OF THIS TRANSMISSION. THEY DID TRY. ORACLE-- OUT.
YOU TRACK THIS BOZO DOWN?
NOT A CHANCE WHOEVER IT IS HAS A RANDOM IMPULSE BOX SOMEWHERE ON A LINE THAT KEEPS BOUNCING THE CALL FROM RELAY TO RELAY TOTALLY RANDOM ORDER. CANNOT BE TRACED.
SO--WHO IS THIS ORACLE? WHAT IS IT? WHY IS IT DOING WHAT IT'S DOING?
COULD BE ANYONE--A KID, AN ADULT. EVEN BLACK ORCHID, HAVING FUN NOW THAT SHE'S DISAPPEARED.
SO WHY DON'T WE USE 'EM? WHOEVER IT IS, IS GOOD!
WE'LL USE THIS BOZO ALL RIGHT--BUT ON MY TERMS!
FLO, CREATE A COMPUTER VIRUS AND LAY IT IN OUR DATA BANK FOR THIS 'ORACLE' TO SWALLOW
I WANT ONE THAT WILL EAT THE SOFTWARE, WIPE OUT THE HARDWARE, AND GIVE ORACLE HIS-OR-HERSELF A SERIOUS SOCIAL DISEASE. GET ON IT.

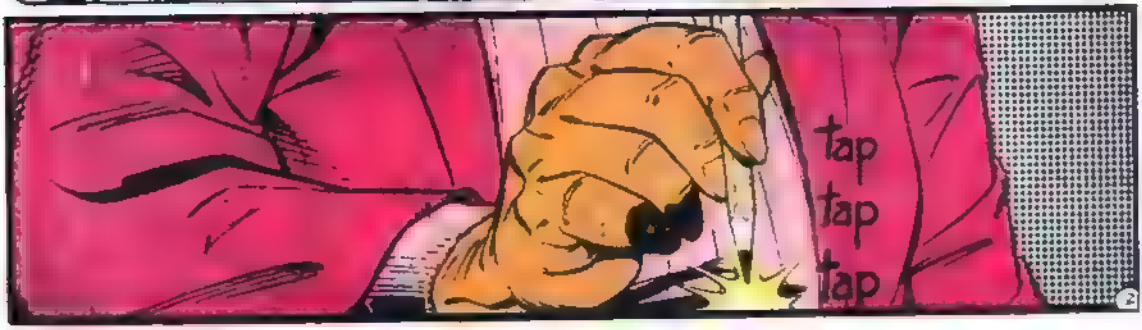

AMANDA? A WORD, PLEASE?
IF WE CAN WALK WHILE WE TALK I GOT PLACES TO BE
IT'S ABOUT THIS INSTITUTE FOR META-HUMAN STUDIES AT VANDERMEER WE LENT THEM--
--PARASITE AND KILLER FROST. FROST GOT FREE AND CAUSED SOME TROUBLE, I HEAR * VERY VERY SLOPPY. TELL EMILY RICE--
* IN FIREZOOM #82 --CROSSOVER BOB
THEY'VE OFFERED TO MAKE ME THE HEAD OF THE INSTITUTE.
I'VE DECIDED TO SAY YES
IT HASN'T HEARD A LOT OF WHAT I'VE SAID LATELY
I SEE THESE PEOPLE AS PATIENTS; YOU SEE THEM AS CANNON FODDER. I WON'T BE A PARTY TO THIS ANYMORE
I'M GETTING OLD AND MY HEARING'S GOING BAD. I DID NOT HEAR WHAT YOU JUST SAID

DON'T PUSH ME ON THIS, SIMON. I PROMISE YOU, IF YOU QUIT, I'LL FIRE YOUR ASSOCIATE, MISS HERRS, AS WELL.
MARNIE'S ALREADY QUIT, AMANDA. YOU NEVER MISSED HER.


I'LL SEND OUT WORD THAT MAKES SURE SHE NEVER GETS A JOB IN HER FIELD AGAIN
I'VE ALREADY WRITTEN HER A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION


I'LL SEE TO IT THAT YOUR OWN FUNDING DRIES UP.
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, AMANDA, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE YOUR HANDS FULLED KEEPING YOUR OWN FUNDING, KEEPING YOUR OWN JOB, AND POSSIBLY JUST KEEPING OUT OF JAIL.
DON'T THREATEN ME, AMANDA.


BEST OF LUCK TO YOU, SIMON.
NOW GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE.


tap
tap
tap

CHIK
TEMPER, TEMPER, CHILE
YOU 'N' ME, WE TALKED OF DIS, REMEMBER? YOU LOOSE THAT TEMPER OF YOURS HERE, AND YOU IN BIG GUMBO, YOU!
I'M OKAY, ANTOINE JUST WISH THEY'D START THIS INQUISITION.
MA CHERIE, YOU GET YOUR WISH, EH?
WE JUST HOPE, MEBBE, YOU DON'T WISH FOR MORE DAN YOU CAN CHEW.
HEY, IT'S JUST ANOTHER FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL.
IT'S WHAT I'M GOOD AT.

...SO, YISEE, MY GETTING MIXED UP WITH OVERLORD AND CADRE AND ALL HAS JUST BEEN PART OF MY CONTINUING ATTEMPTS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH GOD.
SO AFTER THE MOUNTAIN BLEW UP AND ALL, I SAID TO MYSELF, "GIRL, THIS WAS A GIFT GIVEN TO YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR SPIRITUAL QUEST."
UH-HUH.
OOOOO -- SHE'S GONNER SMILE, YES SHE IS!
WE SEE IT! WE SEE IT! THAT LITTLE TICK AT THE END OF THE MONTH! SHE'LL'S GONNER LAUGH! OOOOO BAY-BEE!
SERIOUSLY THO, MATE -- WHY DO YER WEAR A CAR HOOD ORNAMENT ON THE "TOP O' YER HEAD?
YOU BEEN A VEWY VEWY NAUG-HTY GIWRL, JEWELIE
NO, I HAVEN'T!
YES YOU HAVE AND I'M GOING TO HAVE TO HIT YOU WITH DIS HAMMER!
BAM! BAM! BAM!
EEEEEEE!
AND NOW, YOU CAN EAT THIS SALAM!!
OOOOOO! :GIGGLE!:
EVE?
"DON'T SAY ANYTHING IT JUST ENCOURAGES THEM
14

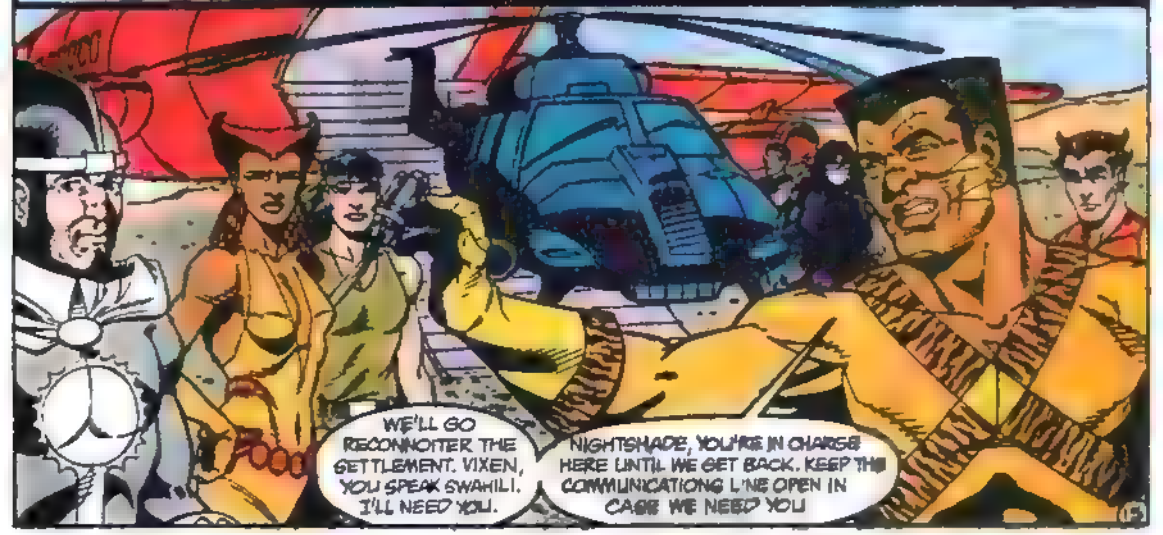
LOOK AT THEM. HOW DID YOUR TEAM EVER BEAT MY TEAM?
WE NEVER FOUGHT THE JIHAD AS A TEAM--ONLY AS INDIVIDUALS. THE ADVANTAGE WAS ALL OURS.

BESIDES, WE'RE YOUR TEAM NOW.
OF COURSE. HOW COULD I FORGET?

DON'T FORGET IF YOU SHOULD EVER TURN AGAINST US, I WILL KILL YOU.
PROMISE?
MMM-HMM.

I MAY KILL HER
SHRIKE? BUT SHE SEEMS SO PLEASANT.
SHE IS UNRELENTINGLY SO. SHE'S FOUND GOD--OR SO SHE SAYS--SINCE WE FOUGHT LAST. HOW MUCH LONGER UNTIL WE GET THERE?

"A FEW HOURS THEN WE'LL LAND OUT WHERE SISTER MARTINON WAS LAST SEEN AND TRY TO PICK UP HER TRAIL."
WOOOSH!


WE'LL GO RECONNOITER THE SETTLEMENT. VIXEN, YOU SPEAK SWAHILI. I'LL NEED YOU.
NIGHTSHADE, YOU'RE IN CHARGE HERE UNTIL WE GET BACK. KEEP THE COMMUNICATIONS LINE OPEN IN CASE WE NEED YOU.

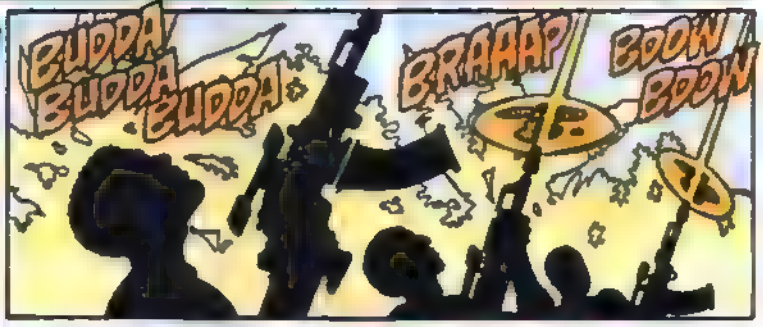
TAO, MAN! I'VE HEARD THE REPORTS OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EAST AFRICA--!
BUT NOTHING PREPARES YOU FOR THE REALITY OF IT. I KNOW.
I WAS BORN ON THIS CONTINENT. AFTER THE JUSTICE LEAGUE DISBANDED,* I CAME HERE FOR AWHILE, TRYING TO HELP.
THE NEED WAS SO GREAT AND WE WERE SO FEW. WE DID ALL THAT WE COULD AND IT DIDN'T BEGIN TO BE ENOUGH. I FLED BACK TO AMERICA, SICK TO MY SOUL.
*SEEN IN LEGENDS. --JOHN & BOB
OH, BEN -- WHAT AM I DOING WITH THE SQUAD? WORKING FOR THAT WOMAN WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY OGADENS IN THIS WORLD?
USING YOUR SKILLS WHERE THEY CAN BE BEST EMPLOYED; VOICING YOUR CONSCIENCE WHERE IT MOST NEEDS TO BE HEARD.
16

SORRY.
ACCORDING TO THE PEOPLE HERE, THE RENAMOS LIVE OFF THE LAND TO SUPPORT THEIR REVOLUTION. THAT INCLUDES TAKING THE FOOD BROUGHT IN FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR THE NATIVES.
THEY FORCE THOSE THEY ROB TO CARRY THE FOOD TO THEIR CAMP. THEN THE NATIVES ARE USED FOR SLAVE LABOR.
ONE OF THESE PEOPLE ESCAPED FROM THEM AND DREW ME A CRUDE MAP IN THE DUST. WE'RE HERE. THE RENAMO CAMP SHOULD BE ABOUT TWENTY KILOMETERS OVER HERE
LET'S GET BACK TO THE OTHERS.
WE HAVE ABOUT THREE MORE HOURS OF DAYLIGHT LEFT
"WE'LL LOCATE THE CAMP AND, UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, INFILTRATE IT, FIND THE NUN, AND BLOW THE HELL OUT OF THE RENAMO SCUM."
TIGER TO SHIELD. WE SHOULD BE IN THE VICINITY OF THE CAMP. YOUR EQUIPMENT FIND ANYTHING?
GOT A VISUAL. STRAIGHT OVER THE NEXT RISE 10 KLICKS AHEAD. YOU AIN'T GONNA LIKE WHAT YOU SEE.

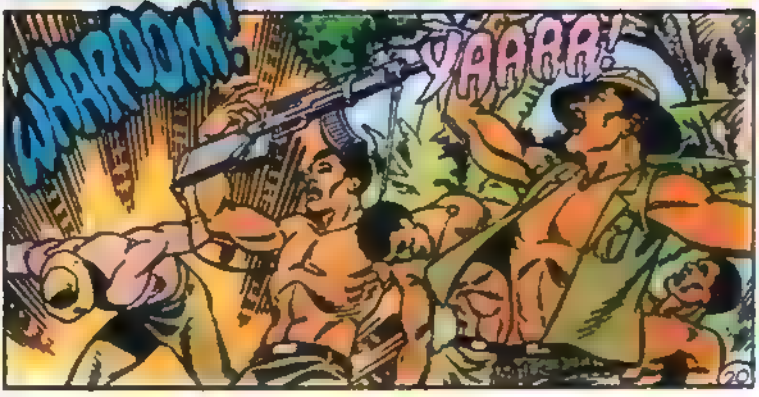
TAO!
NIGHTSHADE, GO FULL SHADOW. SLIP DOWN THERE AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIND THE NUN--DEAD OR ALIVE
DUCHESS, FLANK LEFT. TAKE SHRIKE, SHADE, AND RAVAN SECURE THE PERIMETER IN THAT DIRECTION. THE REST OF US WILL GO RIGHT
ON IT.
SHEBA! I WANT AN INFRARED SCAN OF THIS WHOLE AREA! I WANT TO KNOW IF ANYONE ELSE IS CLOSE BY AND WHAT THEY'RE THINKING!
GOT IT

BEN, THERE'S NO SIGN OF SISTER MARTINON DEAD OR ALIVE BUT I'M FINDING GOVERNMENT TROOPS AMONG THE DEAD
I'VE ALSO FOUND A NATIVE WHO'S STILL ALIVE. HE'S FADING FAST AND I DON'T SPEAK THE LANGUAGE
VIXEN'S ON HER WAY
TIGER SHEBA BOGIES APPROACHING VECTOR SOUTH SOUTHWEST 10 KLICKS
HOW MANY?
TWENTY TWENTY-FIVE TOPS
DRAW THEIR FIRE. WE'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE ALL UNITS -- CONVERGE WHERE YOU SEE SHEBA PICK A FIGHT. VIXEN, STAY WITH NIGHTSHADE AND THE WOUNDED MAN
THWUP THWUP

SHWUP SHWUP


BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
BRAAAP
BOOM BOOM

CHOOM CHOOM


WHAROOM!
YAARR!

FWIP
FWIP
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NEXT: SEA O' TROUBLES

SUICIDE NOTES

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L-3551

Before we begin with the mail on #20, we have an announcement. This will be Luke McDonnell's final issue as penciller of the SUICIDE SQUAD. After 24 monthly issues, the DEADSHOT mini-series, and the SECRET ORIGINS issue, Luke has decided to refocus his energies on his first love, THE PHANTOM. Luke will be pencilling and inking that series, which debuts in two months, and we will miss him terribly here.

We do have a fine replacement all lined up. But first, the next two issues will be by Grant Miehm, a fine artist who is making a name for himself on Dark Horse's *The American*. Then, with #27, and a very special event, we will welcome John K. Snyder III as our resident penciller. Fear not, Karl Kesel isn't going anywhere and will continue to provide a unique spark to the proceedings.

Thanks for the fun times, Luke, and we'll see you in Bengalla!

Dear Bob,

It was good to see Captain Boomerang get what he deserved in "Practice to Deceive." For too long he has been an unnecessary and unpleasant part of the Squad, and while I don't expect to see any change in his personality, I sure did enjoy seeing him get his comeuppance. What I don't understand is why Amanda wants him in the Suicide Squad in the first place. My only regret about the Mirror Master charade is that the Flash never got to encounter Captain Boomerang/Mirror Master. That would have been a funny and memorable story!

I'm sorry to see Bob Lewis leave this book, but Karl Kesel is the best replacement/return the book could have had. Suicide Squad is one of the consistently best books DC puts out, and the artwork is a big part of that. Of course, it doesn't hurt to have as colorful and diverse a cast of characters as this book does.

Just a few questions before I sign off: Are there any plans for another JLI-Suicide Squad face-off? Will there be any new faces in the Squad? (I'm still hoping for the return of the Clock King!) And last, will we ever see June Moone again, now that the Enchantress is gone?

Jim Kelly
20 Randall Ave., Apt. 1W
Freeport, NY 11520

Captain Boomerang is an opportunist, and therefore Amanda is better served by having him along for missions where she can keep an eye on him. He already tried to blurt out the Squad's secret back in LEGENDS #5, but what will happen to the good Captain now that everyone knows the secret remains to be seen.

Yes, Keith Giffen, John Ostrander and I are already talking about the next JLI-SS team-up and Keith wants them to play baseball. As for new faces in the Squad, this issue will answer that question. And by now, you've seen June Moone again. Did you catch Clock King in JLI #23?

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Dear John, Robert, Luke, Todd and company,

I knew that sooner or later, good old Captain Boomerang was going to get his unmentionables caught in a wringer because he impersonated Mirror Master. I knew it. I expected it. I looked forward to it.

But after reading SS #20 I just can't understand why I didn't *enjoy* it more. Maybe it was because I'm tiring of seeing Boomerang used in these stories as a sterotypical melodrama villain. He has been about as useless as Dr. Smith was on the old *Lost in Space* TV series and yet (again, like Dr. Smith) everyone keeps rescuing him and insisting he live up to his obligations. Well ... to heck with that! If he isn't going to contribute any more than comic relief or function as an easy target for the group's humiliation, he doesn't deserve to stay with the group. On a "suicide" mission I sure wouldn't want to have a guy on my side who doesn't *want* to be there. Since his talents as even a supervillain are minimal, and since he isn't pulling his weight as a team member, why keep him around just to jerk his chain? If the only contribution he makes is to be a resentful sidekick, you might as well replace him with Ed Norton.

This is not to say, however, that the issue was without redeeming qualities. The cover was among the best I've seen in this series and the hoodoo of voodoo that you do so well, sets up a good future plot. So does the sub-plot about another Mirror Master. Wouldn't it be funny if the new Mirror Master was the *old* Mirror Man from 1960's BATMAN comics? No? Well, it was just a thought.

One final note: I've noticed in recent issues of CAPTAIN ATOM that Amanda can press Nightshade into service without deploying the entire squad. I think this is a *great* idea and I'd like to see her send Flag on a solo mission to investigate the Doom Patrol or send Deadshot on a solo mission to examine Starman in future issues of those comics.

T.E. Pouncey
Wichita, KS

We've seen Boomerang pull his weight time and again, such as his role in issue #7 or even more recently in handling the Australian end of last issue's "Weird War Tales." He is just such a geek that you forget he can make a contribution.

Meantime, check out ANIMAL MAN #8 for the new Mirror Master's DC debut.

*****

Dear Bob,

SUICIDE SQUAD #20. Two villains. One character. Voodoo gangsters. False zombies. Hijinks in a cemetery. No breasts. Academy Award nomination for Amanda Waller for announcing, "Deep Under, you are in deep doo doo." Three and one half stars. Joe Bob says check it out.

Mark Lucas
66 Cleary Court #902
San Francisco, CA 94109

*****

Dear Bob,

Before I received issue #20 of SUICIDE SQUAD, I was sure that I would soon be dropping the title from my monthly list. The Nightshade Odyssey and Jihad stories didn't impress me at all, and the artwork was beginning to look rather limp. Issue #20, however, has persuaded me to give SS another chance. The Captain Boomerang story this issue was simply great, a much-needed change from metaphysical mumbo-jumbo and bland international intrigue. This voodoo-mobster thing is also interesting and promising. Hearing that Karl Kesel is returning solidified my change of heart. His inks are exactly the life-giving quality that

Luke's pencils need. Don't mess up this time, guys.

FAM
216 Riverside Drive
Toronto, Ontario M6S 4A9
CANADA

*****

Dear John O.,

I did it! I did it!

Hot damn, I finally did it!

I finally managed to figure out *where* you were going and *what* you were planning on doing over the course of SUICIDE SQUAD #20 before you actually went and did it.

I'm so proud of myself I could just hum!

Uncle Elvis
17650 Dawson Road
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

P.S. Just in case you're curious about how I caught on so easily, it's because of the Manhunter/Waller scenario. It absolutely screamed "set-up" at me. And I listened.

*****

Dear Bob,

Why did I have a feeling that nobody was smart enough to put something over on Waller?

Bob Felber
60 Ruskin Avenue
Woonsocket, RI 02895

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Dear Suicide Crew,

"Practice to Deceive" was great! It was really funny to see Down Under down and out. Even though Boomerang got caught, don't let him lose the style he had before. The Lou seems like a real interesting upcoming problem. By the way, where was Captain Cold that issue? I really like him, and would like to see his character developed to the max.

Not to change the subject, but how about sending the Squad to the Olympics undercover? It would be interesting to see some of the Squad members compete against the other athletes. Who knows, maybe Vixen might win a medal in Track and Field. And of course, Deadshot would have to win a gold in shooting.

I'd like to have appearances in future issues by Poison Ivy, The Trickster, Heatwave and Gypsy, along with Mr. Bones, if he isn't busy or something.

I can't wait to see the great things you'll turn up next.

Robb Enloe
5721 West 100th Street
Overland Park, KS 66207

Captain Cold served on his mission, lived, and was released as seen in FLASH #19. He'll be turning up there in a forthcoming issue, along with his sister, Golden Glider.

As for the Olympics, obviously nothing in the cards this time. Check back in four years and we'll see. Remember, Vixen couldn't compete using the Tantu totem, so I imagine she would place a poor second to the likes of Flo-Jo.

One of the above named nominees will turn up by next summer.

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Dear Squaders,

Issue #20—excellent reading! Perfect art! "Practice to Deceive" was the best issue so far. It's about time the good Captain Boomerbutt got his. Kind of funny seeing him getting caught in this fashion. It was a gas. It was a classic to see the insides of the Captain nearly come running out. I'm amazed at how scared he is of The Wall. Probably because he's a loser.

Well, gotta go.

Jason Smereka
No Address Given

P.S. Any chance of the Bug-Eyed Bandit getting his memory back and joining the Squad for a couple of issues? How about Dr. Destiny, Dr. Double-X, Dr. Phosphorus, Breathtaker, Brainstorm, Cat-Man, Cadre, Cavalier, Calculator, Clock King, Count Vertigo, Dr. Alchemy, Dr. Polaris, and Quakemaster?

Bug-Eyed Bandit died in the Crisis, so forget him. Dr. Destiny will turn up in our brand-new SANDMAN series. Dr. Double-X is too silly for this team. Dr. Phosphorus—maybe. Breathtaker is out of the question (didn't he die?). Brainstorm could be fun. Cat-Man we haven't thought about. Shrike from Cadre is here this very issue. The Cavalier is a possibility; so is the Calculator. Count Vertigo is now a member of the team. Dr. Alchemy could also be fun. Dr. Polaris would be a bit too powerful for the line-up. Quakemaster makes his triumphant return in the pages of our newest mini-series, HERO HOT LINE. Check it out!

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

Okay, we've set the stage and now we will see what happens next. The Squad is at full strength and taking on the goons in Ogaden. That surely means disaster will strike and it will as another member dies and someone else quits the team. You won't want to miss out on this one, especially with Amanda still facing Senator Eden in Washington. Grant Miehm joins John and Karl and the results will be quite fun.

Meantime, don't forget to check out MANHUNTER and FLASH where all sorts of odd doings are happening, especially as the Flash tries to regain his powers. Then there's DOOM PATROL, where I've changed everything about that team and bumped it to the New Format. It's gotta be seen to be believed, courtesy of Grant Morrison and Richard Case.

And of course, next month we'll detail the special events starting with SQUAD #27. All I'll say now is that you'd better start saving up 'cause you won't want to miss a single *week* of the fun. For now, though, keep smiling!

—Bob Greenberger